



Austin Youth River Watch

Transforming and inspiring youth through environmental education, community engagement, and adventure.



"Because of River Watch, I can say I did one big thing for Austin."



"When I'm at River Watch, it's like a weird family. I feel safe, and I can be myself."



"River Watch built my son a future. I'm very proud of him, and I'm proud of the program."

Austin Youth River Watch is a nonprofit organization offering an afterschool and summer program with a hands-on approach to environmental science, primarily to underserved high school students. Our students, the "River Watchers," collect, analyze, and publish water-quality data from 28 sites along Austin area rivers, creeks, and streams. While doing this, they are applying concepts in chemistry, biology, microbiology, ecology, and math. They report their data to the City of Austin and LCRA.



Right: River Watchers gathering water quality data along the Colorado River at Hornsby Bend. Left: River Watchers measuring dissolved oxygen content at the same place. Below: A River Watcher and a UT ichthyologist collect fish samples at Waller Creek.

River Watchers also work with community partners environmental restoration projects to improve watershed health throughout the Austin area. These projects include native vegetation plantings, stream bank stabilization, and green infrastructure projects, such as rain garden construction. They introduce our students to elementary concepts in environmental engineering.



Austin Youth River Watch provides modest stipends to our students, and serves about 120 students annually at 10 local public high schools: Akins, Austin, Crockett, Eastside Memorial, Lanier, LBJ/LASA, Manor, McCallum, Reagan, and Travis. River Watchers develop a deep sense of community, and learn about opportunities for their future. Our graduation rate has been nearly 100% since 1992, and more than half of our students each year continue to pursue STEM or environmental career paths. Over 80% of River Watchers report greater confidence in STEM and awareness of STEM and environmental career choices, after just one year in the program.

For more information or to get involved, visit us <http://riverwatchers.org/>.